

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 1, line 22, as follows:

The above specimen centrifuge apparatus is capable of centrifuging a specimen with efficiency. However, the apparatus requires a relatively large space because the first and second rotors need to be arranged together on the horizontal surface. The apparatus is difficult to centrifuge a number of specimens at once because its centrifuging capacity is restricted. Even ~~though~~when the number of specimens to be centrifuged is very small, the apparatus ~~need~~needs to be operated.~~—It, and it~~ is therefore likely that energy will be consumed in vain.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 4, line 9, as follows:

FIG. 7 is a longitudinal sectional view ~~showing~~showing a specimen centrifuge system according to a second embodiment of the present invention, which corresponds to Fig. 3.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 6, line 18, as follows:

A rack elevator 30 is provided in front of the centrifuge unit 10 along a vertical conveyance line VL that passes by the specimen centrifuges 11, 12 and 13. The rack elevator 30 can convey the specimen-container racks 4, which store the specimen containers 1, in the vertical direction as indicated by double-headed arrow Z in FIG. 3. The rack elevator 30 includes a pair of hoisting and lowering mechanisms 31 and 32 that are arranged at regular intervals. The mechanism 31 has a drive motor 31a and an endless belt 31b, and the mechanism 32 has a drive motor 32a and an endless belt 32b. The endless belts 31b and 32b are opposed in parallel to each other. A robot arm device 40 is located between the hoisting and lowering mechanisms 31 and 32 and its both sides are coupled to their corresponding portions of the mechanisms 31 and 32 on the same level. When the mechanisms 31 and 32 are driven at the same time, the robot arm device 40 is hoisted and lowered by the endless belts 31b and 32b with its both sides supported

ITOH

Appl. No. 10/686,631

January 23, 2006

by the mechanisms. The controller 50 controls the robot arm device 40 such that the robot arm device can stop exactly in positions corresponding to levels L11, ~~L23~~L12 and L13.

Consequently, the specimen-container racks 2 to be conveyed are operated to move in positions opposite to the windows 111, 121 and 131 of the specimen centrifuges 11, 12 and 13.